


Daniel Hawkins Overton

OF

Mattituck



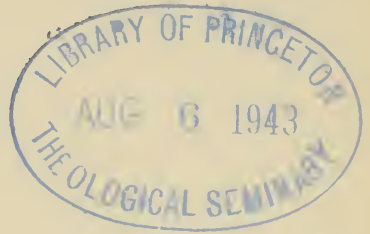
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PUBLISHED BY HIS CABINET
AS A MEMORIAL

FOREWORD

As members of the Cabinet of Rev. Daniel H. Overton we were fortunate in becoming intimately acquainted with him and grew to love and respect him as friend and pastor. It is therefore a great pleasure to dedicate this book in loving memory of one who helped us to gain a clearer vision of the Better Life and taught us the true meaning of the words, Friend and Brother.

ELLIS G. REEVE,
HARRY I. ALDRICH,
ELWOOD S. REEVE,
J. TROWBRIDGE KIRKUP,
MALCOLM M. REEVE.

HIS CREED

I believe in God, the Supreme Power of nature, perpetually creating, eternally perfecting all things that are.

I believe in God, a presence in human history, manifesting Himself in all history, but fully manifest only in Jesus of Nazareth in Galilee, who was born into the humblest circumstances, a Jew of the lower class, in the most despised city of all Israel, in a day of tyranny and revolt; worked many years as a carpenter; was baptized by John, a prophet of the Kingdom; became conscious of power; was tempted in all things like as we are, to misuse His gifts, but sinned not; suffered in all things the suffering of the innocent, set upon by great powers of evil which He had sought to overthrow; was crucified for instigating a revolution, dead—utterly dead, no least possibility of error—and buried. With Him died utterly the kindling flame of His spirit; and stayed dead three days. On the third day—a circumstance I do not pretend to understand—He was alive again, lighting again with an abiding hope the burdened hearts of His disciples; and has remained alive

through all the centuries, drawing new followers to His side.

I believe in God, an Actuality of present experience, called the Holy Spirit, working ever in our minds and hearts His holy will. This inner experience I count fully sufficient in itself unto faith, however dependent it may be historically on outward events.

I believe that these three, God, the Supreme power of nature, God, a Presence in human history, and God, an Actuality of present experience, are not three but One; that the power that controls the ponderous heavenly bodies is the same loving Father that revealed himself in Jesus of Nazareth, the eternal Christ; and that this God and Father of our Lord Jesus is in turn the same Influence that broods over our hearts to quicken them to life.

I believe in the kingdom of God, the perfect society which God perpetually creates by the fellowship of them that believe; I believe in the forgiveness of sins—God writing off our past failures in a kind of perpetual bankruptcy proceeding, and granting us new credit to begin anew. I believe that no value, once created by the Father, Son, and Spirit, is ever lost.

DANIEL H. OVERTON.

POEM

Just to accept Him,
What! not enough
For the borning Christian!
Why that's of the stuff
Of heroes and martyrs.

Just to accept Him,
Too slight a thing?
While the cross still towers
And the earth-bound fling
Their jeers at His anguish.

Just to accept Him
A personal Saviour,
Does that, then, contain
No pledge of behavior—
No abjuring of sin?

No joining of battle?
What! not a word
In accepting Christ, of
“Not peace but a sword”
In our day of strife?

—DANIEL H. OVERTON.

HIS TASK

(By Leila Atwood Foust)

To those who were privileged to be intimately associated with Daniel Overton, there came a consciousness of the fact that his ministry was to be unique; the result of positive convictions, based upon the character and life of Jesus, the Christ, and the great suffering of the world of to-day. As he studied carefully and prayerfully the word of God, as interpreted by the fathers of yesterday, and the students and scientists of to-day, so he studied men of the past and the men of his own day; that he might be fully equipped to meet their need. In order to do this accurately he lived and worked with and taught all classes of men; like his Master, the men of limitations, circumscribed by customs, laws and world-old traditions, appealed to him most. During his vacation time, which might have been spent in recreation or in travel and in acquiring that culture that accrues from intimate association with professors, scholars and peoples of wealth and refinement, he chose rather to work "on the road" with pick, shovel and lunch-box, that he might get close to their need and into the hearts of men he called

brother; the men the world calls the foreigner, the laboring man, the man to be kept under. One day, while working under a summer sun, toil-stained and weary, a foreigner, in his broken English, said, "Mr. Danny, you Jesus man, and you work with me!" "Yes, yes," came the answer, with that radiant smile and brotherly hand-grasp, "Why not, Peter?" Ah! like his Christ, the people heard him gladly and marveled as he ministered unto them.

While Seminary days were crowded with interesting studies and fellowships, he divided his valuable time, and taught in a private school, the sons of the millionaire, the rich and the influential of the great city, in order that he might also study their viewpoint and their place in the great struggle for freedom and democracy. How well he taught is seen in this incident, after a game of football on the campus, one day. A lad, with a generation of aristocrats behind him, and a fortune for his future, came running to Master Overton, shouting, "Oh! I see what you mean, the only way to play is to play fair." No wonder Master Overton dreamed of the day when this old world shall swing back into the Fatherhood of God, when millionaires' sons have learned to play fair.

The evenings of these same strenuous days were given to the men and boys of the East Side in the Settlement; comprising all nationalities, and the despised Jew. They crowded into the gym and classrooms where he taught them brotherhood, comradeship, and a loyal Americanism. Coming into the gymnasium a few moments late, one evening, he heard a little Italian chap shout, "Here he comes. Play like we gotta beat, like he says, we gotta win." And they are playing yet, and their teacher believed God and trusted they would win.

Frequently, in returning to his home late in the evening, he would stop to listen to some soap-box orator, on the street corner, and in all sympathy, hear their cry for justice. On one such occasion, he noticed the young woman speaking had a folded newspaper in her hand, to which she often referred. The paper, a New York weekly, was printed in her own native tongue. Speaking to her after her address had been given to that conglomerate crowd, he asked to see the paper from which she had received her facts. As he read, he found that Americanism and patriotism had been so misrepresented, that were we in their place, we would take the same stand for liberty

and justice. Can you not comprehend why he pleaded for the justice that is so long delayed; for the sympathy and the brotherhood that is the God-given right for all?

To Daniel Overton, the ministry was the Cross, the sacrifice, the criticisms, the poverty, and the glory of the "Well done" of the Father, when his task was done. But think not of him as sad or lonely or disheartened; to him, the Kingdom was coming; that light which lighteneth every man, was to illuminate the wide, wide world; and for him was the joy of holding that light high, while men looked to his flaming torch and lived. He is not dead. He is just away. And from his uplifted light, the radiant gleam still falls on our way, and we can almost hear him saying, in the words of one he loved,

There is a light where'er I go,
There is a Splendor where I wait.
Though all around be desolate,
Warm on my eyes I feel the glow.

The fight is long, the triumph slow,
Yet shall my soul stand strong and straight;
There is a light where'er I go,
There is a Splendor where I wait.

My enemy is strong, I know;
His arts are sly, his guns are great.
I do not fear him or his hate.
In fog, in darkness, gropes my foe.
There is a light where'er I go.

DANIEL HAWKINS OVERTON

(By John G. Hehr)

On the twenty-eighth of February nineteen hundred and twenty-one in the attractive village of Mattituck, on Peconic Bay, N. Y., a young man died, who after a thorough preparation for a long and useful life in the ministry had just settled down with his young wife for a strenuous work in the interest of Christ's kingdom. His plans were laid out, the work begun, and the first fruits of his enthusiastic and faithful efforts had been already recognized by a grateful congregation, when suddenly the order of his Master reached him like an unexpected summons of a higher tribunal to leave his flock, his wife, his child, all his relatives, his study, his field of labor, his plans for the future, his hopes for success and all that was precious to his heart and mind in this lower plane of life and to join his dear father and mother who had preceded him into the upper realm of our future life and activity.

This young man was none other than the Rev. Daniel Hawkins Overton, the beloved pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Mattituck, N. Y. It is my object in this chapter to

just give a short sketch of his life during his school years and his preparation for the high calling as a minister of the gospel.

Rev. Daniel H. Overton was born at Southold, N. Y., on September fifth, eighteen hundred and ninety-six, at the home of his grandparents, Jonathan B. Terry and his wife, Martha Terry. The father of young Daniel was a distinguished member of the Brooklyn Presbytery and at the time of the birth of Daniel, pastor of the Greene Avenue Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn. His mother, Carrie Overton, daughter of Jonathan B. Terry, a banker of Southold, was a woman of fine intellect, culture and pleasant graceful manners. It is the mother in particular that imparted to her son that winning smile and his dignified bearing, while no doubt he inherited from his father his cordiality, his frankness, his democratic spirit, his strong physique, his studiousness and his love for athletics.

He was named at his christening after his father and the old testament prophet, Daniel, with the ardent wish of his parents that he might follow in his father's footsteps in becoming a minister of the gospel and be endowed with the spirit of the great prophet of

Israel. His name was therefore a constant admonishment to him to strive for this great object in life which his parents had designed for him.

The spring of his life was full of sunshine. Only once a dark and threatening cloud of an infantile sickness spread its heavy shadow over him which kept him for over a half year from school. It was very fortunate for him to have his grandparents living in Southold, which made it possible to enjoy during the summer months the open nature which contributed a great deal towards his physical development. During the winter season he stayed with his parents in Brooklyn and attended school. In the year nineteen hundred and nine he graduated from Public School No. 26, and in nineteen hundred and thirteen, from the high school in Islip, N. Y., where his parents had moved to since. After leaving the high school he entered Lafayette College at Easton, Pa., the college which his father attended in his days. After a four years' course he graduated with honors and entered the Union Theological Seminary of New York in nineteen hundred and seventeen to study for the ministry. Though his choice of this school was influenced by his father, who himself was

a graduate of it, he could hardly have entered any other school that would have suited him better. In reference to this Mrs. Minnie Terry Smith of Peconic, N. Y., an aunt of his, remarks: "Daniel, while studying at Lafayette College was not altogether clear to himself as to his future object in life, nor did the environment greatly inspire him there, but when he came to the Union Theological Seminary he found, not only the element he liked, but he found himself."

In nineteen hundred and twenty he graduated from the Seminary and came before the Presbytery of Brooklyn-Nassau to be examined for license to preach the gospel. The examination took place and revealed that the young candidate was not only a scholar but also a thinker. His written confession as to his belief was a masterpiece and indicated clearly that he was not going to preach church doctrine, no matter whether he was in full accord with it or not, but that he would preach the truth, as he understood it, and that he would not stoop down to preach or teach anything of which he was not personally convinced. He passed his examination gloriously and received his license and soon after, the ordination for the ministry. All this took place in the pres-

ence of his happy father, who received from the Presbytery the most enthusiastic congratulations on behalf of a son that gave so much reasonable hope for success and future greatness. Alas! how different did matters turn out from what they were expected to be.

Daniel's election as pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Mattituck, N. Y., was a triumph for him. Due to the resignation of Dr. Craven, this church was without a minister and it resolved to have a young man elected into Dr. Craven's place. The church gave our Daniel the first chance to preach a trial sermon. After having delivered two sermons, one in the morning and one in the evening service, the congregation was so well pleased with his preaching that it resolved not to invite any further candidates, but elect young Overton. "We want **the** young man and not a young man," shouted the young people. The election took place and Daniel received a unanimous vote as pastor of the large and influential church at Mattituck, N. Y. How he made good in this, his first parish, and how his popularity grew among his people will be described in one of the other chapters of this booklet.

Daniel came to Mattituck as a married man.

He gave no hope to young ladies to become the first lady of the church, nor to any mother of attractive daughters, to be the future mother-in-law of the new pastor. The love for the young pastor was therefore general and unbiased. Yes, Daniel was married when he came to Mattituck and this was well for him and for the congregation. In choosing his life's partner Daniel evidently believed in home products. As a candidate for the ministry, preaching in various churches, he came in touch with many fair young women of prominent families, yet there was none among them that compared with that beautiful flower that grew up in the house of a neighbor across the street from his father's house in Islip. It was Marian, the daughter of the Rev. John J. Foust, and his wife, Leila, both noted preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, that drew his attention, which soon changed into admiration and love and finally resulted in an exceedingly happy marriage and an ideal family life.

Yet there is nothing lasting in this world of contrasts and changes. The higher the mountain, the deeper the valley; the greater our happiness the more intense our sorrow.

But we know too that while after sunshine storms will come, yet sunshine bright and clear will follow after storms.

A few of the strong characteristics in Daniel's life, which were at the bottom of his exceptional success and popularity, should not be omitted in this short sketch. For if these remarks have any purpose at all it is not to glorify this young preacher, but to show by his example to others, especially to young men of this, our pleasure-craving generation, what there is needed to attain unto true success in life.

The first great virtue in his character was filial consideration. Daniel knew that his father was not a rich man and that in giving him a college education he made a sacrifice in his behalf. He felt that this should be an obligation to him to use his time and opportunity for conscientious study and lose no time and waste no money in useless pastime and extravagance. On the contrary, in order to help his father to carry the burden of his education, he worked hard to earn for himself a scholarship, which, having been awarded to him, helped to pay his way through the Seminary. Such traits enoble a young man and endear him to God and man. Another

feature in his character was his joy in doing good to others and in particular to his country. This feature prompted him during his stay in Easton, Pa., inasmuch as he could not enlist as a soldier, to devote each days three hours in ammunition-making and thereby serving his country in a way possible for him. In the same benevolent spirit he undertook the much-needed settlement work in New York City. His democratic spirit and a keen sense of justice and right was another trait in his character. All men were alike to him. His heart went out in tender sympathy towards every man, woman and child in need and his hands stretched forth to uplift those that were downtrodden and outraged by others, or suffering from their own errors and follies in life, while his wrath came down like thunderbolts upon those that wronged their fellowmen by exploitation of their labor and by a thousand other ways in which unscrupulous men are putting themselves into possession of that for which others have toiled and labored. He regarded all labor as honorable and despised and hated the drones of human society. In this spirit you would find him on a Sunday in the pulpit of a fashionable church in Greenwich, N. Y., or in Brent-

wood, N. Y., and on week days standing shoulder to shoulder with other workingmen making streets in Islip.

Daniel H. Overton was a man good at heart and as all such men are drawing others unto themselves, like a magnet will draw iron, he naturally became the center of attraction wherever he came in touch with other people. This is in particular true with regard to his position as pastor among his people at Mattituck. Rev. Edwin Arthur Burtt, assistant pastor of the St. Paul's Methodist Church in New York City and a classmate of Daniel at the Seminary, writes in a letter of condolence to his bereft widow, in regard to this as follows: "He was a classmate of mine at the Seminary. We had many courses together, and I knew him well, and all who knew him at all, loved, admired and respected him. He was a rare Christian character, manly, hopeful, true and gloriously ambitious in the Christian way—ambitious for Christ."

In the same strain one of his professors, Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, writes: "He was one of the best loved students in the Seminary and one who showed great promise, particularly as a pastor."

Yes, Daniel H. Overton was a good man

who showed great promise. But why such a man should be removed at the start of his useful activity, we are unable to fathom and it will remain at least for this world a mystery. Sufficient for us to know that it is God's will and God makes no mistakes.

REV. DANIEL HAWKINS OVERTON

(By John J. Foust)

Born in Southold, N. Y., September 5th, 1896.

Graduated from Lafayette College, Easton, Pa., 1918.

Married to Miss Marian Watson Foust, May 11th, 1918.

Graduated from Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1920.

Ordained in his father's church, Islip, N. Y., 1920.

Began pastorate at Mattituck, L. I., May 22d, 1920.

Crowned February 28th, 1921. Twenty-four years and six months of life!

This is the number of his days, and above are the outstanding events of his brief earthly career. But this recital does not tell the whole story of his life.

“We live in deeds, not years; in thought, not breaths;

In feelings, not in figures on the dial.

We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives

Who thinks most, feels noblest, acts the best.”

Daniel Overton was a slave to a great absorbing passion for an ideal. He did not hold it, but in a most real sense it held him a prisoner. His only release was in expression. He believed a great portion of the human race were hampered and wickedly hindered by inequalities of birth that were unnecessary, and by physical limitations that could and should be removed. He saw "personality, with rich possibilities in it, everywhere nipped and stunted, its flowers unopened, its fruit unborne." He felt himself called of God to raise his voice in behalf of "the terribly handicapped and beaten masses of mankind, whipped by poverty, sickness, ignorance, and sin," and against those who ruthlessly profited by their weakness. He was perfectly fearless in the declaration of his principles because he was so confident of their correctness and timeliness. He was by nature fitted to become the tireless advocate of an unpopular cause. He had the martyr spirit and would have paid the utmost cost rather than keep silent while great wrongs needed to be made right. He was completely enamored of his one great purpose. All else took its place in relation to it. He bought books and pamphlets on his great themes. Everybody he met soon learned their

contents and was urged to read them. He would read incessantly and so intently that anything could happen around him and not disturb him while his own soul responded to the soul of the author. His espousal of his cause was not the result of reading alone. Before he was of age, he spent his summers earning his pin money by working on the highways and digging trenches with foreigners. While he was in this way building up his splendid body, he had the rare opportunity of studying at close range the people exemplifying his views. In his rollicking moods he would occasionally imitate the language of these workmen, reproducing their very words, tone of voice and look. But his fun making had no slur or reproach for the men themselves. If it be true that "familiarity breeds contempt" it was not so here. No laboring man could ever have had a truer representative nor more ardent advocate than he who laid down the pick and shovel and went into the pulpit, which he kept sacred to the eloquent espousal of their cause.

He hated shams. He would never have enjoyed the life of the idle rich. He loved people for what they were not because of what they possessed or what they might mean to him if

they became his friends. He had a great programme for his own life and wanted his friends and especially his Church to discover and adopt it for their very own. He had a simplicity like that of his Divine Master, and in his greatest victories it kept him modest and unassertive. Religion to him, was life, not simply a set of holy principles, or pious emotions. Life, which, if it had been greatly blessed and therefore had become beautiful, had accordingly greater obligations to those from whom these things had been denied or withheld.

“No mystic voices from the heavens above

Now satisfy the souls which Christ confess:
Their heavenly vision is in works of love,

A new age summons to new saintliness.

Before the uncloistered shrine of human needs

And all unconscious of the worth or price,
They lay their fragrant gifts of gracious deeds
Upon the altar of self-sacrifice.”

His home life was ideal. His love for his wife was a holy and sacred experience. She was his other self. They were well mated, each complementing the other. His fatherhood was beautifully revealed in his relation to his own boy. What a picture of parental love to see this physical giant of a father tenderly carrying that little bit of humanity. Anyone

hearing him plan for wife and boy would know that his very soul was mortgaged forever to his own. The memory of this loving young father hovers as a sacred presence over the suddenly and inexplicably broken home circle.

His Church was his world. The people were his other family. He saw them as individuals and planned for them separately. He knew no preferences. He loved them as those for whom God would hold him accountable. There is a kind of tender pathos in the special privilege his Mattituck people enjoyed. They received his only ministry, except as he had preached occasionally in various places. He had prepared for years. He had studied till late at night. He had prayed, toiled, planned, hoped and sacrificed—and all just for this one people. No one else ever received his regular ministry. His sermons were prepared in the white heat of his early manhood, and all were spoken to this one audience. An entire life, lived on high levels, exhausted in this one service. This is indeed a peculiarly sacred privilege for those who composed his only parish, and who received his very soul's life.

The light of his candle has gone out! Many years had been carefully spent in fashioning a special model so that it might be big and strong and of such a quality as to give no

uncertain light. It was to stand in a large place for a long time. It was to give light in high places so that men could see their way, especially those who were compelled to live and struggle in the low places. Many did find their way while this light shined—a path illuminated all the way to God.

Then some unruly boisterous wind blew out the candle, and broke the candlestick. There is darkness and the brilliant light is only a memory. Many sit in this darkness and wonder in amazement. Who shall tell them why this much needed light is gone?

“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”

Jesus, the light of world, said: “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” “I am the resurrection and the life, whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.” “My strength is made perfect in weakness.” “Come unto Me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.” “What I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter.” “I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly.”

“Yet Love will dream and Faith will trust,
Since he who knows our need is just,
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees!
Who hopeless lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play;
Who hath not learned in hours of faith
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That life is ever Lord of Death
And Love can never lose its own.”

MR. OVERTON AS PASTOR AND PREACHER

(By Terry W. Tuthill)

It is indeed rare to find a single personality presenting the many-sided development which was found in our young pastor, Daniel Overton. In his character there existed to an unusual degree those varied qualities of mind and heart which made him at once both a good preacher and a good pastor. He was the consecrated exponent of an ideal; but he was, also, the practical leader of men. He inspired his co-workers with the consciousness of the beauty of true service; the consciousness, which he himself possessed, that service for the Master is not merely a duty but an honor. He felt, and made others feel, that the work of Christ's Kingdom should, however, be done not only lovingly and earnestly, but also efficiently.

Shortly before his illness, Mr. Overton sent in to the headquarters of the New Era Movement a report of what had been done in the Mattituck Church in carrying out the policies of that organization. He received in reply a letter of congratulation, stating that his church

had accomplished more of the objectives recommended than had any other church in the outlying districts.

One of the first bits of organization which Mr. Overton effected was that of his Sunday School class. A president and a secretary were elected, and the class, which grew rapidly in numbers, became greatly interested in the discussion of such timely subjects of every day life as were suggested by him from time to time. Monthly meetings were held at which games and refreshments were enjoyed, followed by discussions of topics of the day. One of the tenets strongly held by Mr. Overton was that Religion cannot be kept separate from the other interests of the true Christian's life. In a sermon delivered a short time before his death, he expressed the idea something like this: The true Christian cannot pigeonhole in his mind the different interests of his everyday life, and say, "This is a matter of politics; this, a matter of recreation; and this, of religion." God is spirit and that spirit should permeate and control all the activities to which a follower of Christ sets his hand. Therefore, Mr. Overton thought it not wrong to introduce into religious meetings many subjects commonly considered to be purely in the

sphere of economics or politics. He endeavored to apply Christian principles to the problems of everyday existence and thus to make them a vital, active force in men's lives. It cannot be doubted that his ultimate aim was the personal salvation of the members of his flock. Evidence of this is given by the fact that shortly before his death he asked each member of his Sunday School class to write out a personal creed embodying each one's religious beliefs. His death came before many of these were completed; but, in asking for these expressions of belief, he was utilizing one of the greatest working principles of pedagogy: i. e., working from the known to the unknown—from the problems of the material life to those of the spiritual. The creed which he himself wrote speaks for itself of his own unflinching faith.

In September came the organization of the Hour Club, in this manner: a paper with the following heading was circulated for signatures among the members of the church and congregation:

"We, the undersigned, being convinced that the work of the church can be accomplished only by the concentrated efforts of her members, do hereby pledge ourselves to devote to

such work as the Pastor's Cabinet may direct at least one hour every week, unless prevented by a reason we could conscientiously give our Master." While to some the signing of the paper seemed like the signing of a blank check, yet such was their confidence in their pastor's judgment and fairness that some two hundred placed their names on the list. A member of Mr. Overton's Cabinet was given charge of this branch of the work and, with the advice of the other Cabinet members, sent out weekly assignments to those who had enrolled. These duties were varied, sometimes changing from week to week; but their objective was always the furtherance of the Kingdom. Later, these members of the Hour Club were divided geographically into groups of five or six families. From each unit a "group leader" was selected whose duty it was to call on the "shut-ins," report new cases of illness to the Pastor's Cabinet, watch out for prospective members, spur on the lagging ones, distribute religious literature and in every way possible further the work of the Church in that unit. The work of the Hour Club resulted in quickening all the existing organizations of the Church and in stimulating the sense of personal responsibility toward them.

Some time previous to Mr. Overton's coming here the pastors of the Cutchogue churches, together with several of the teachers in their Sunday Schools, had organized themselves into a Teachers' Training Class and had been holding weekly meetings. Their objectives were the training of new teachers to take the places left vacant from time to time; a better understanding of the subject matter of the Sunday School lessons, and the stimulating of interest through interchange of ideas. Mr. Overton felt that the members of the Mattituck Sunday School were missing a rare opportunity for development in not joining this group of Bible students, and therefore advocated joining with them. He met with hearty co-operation from his Sunday School teachers and the arrangement to join the Cutchogue people at their meetings was satisfactorily made. Thus one more organization became a part of Mr. Overton's work among us.

The choir was the next organization to which Mr. Overton turned his attention. This branch of the church's activities lacked a leader, and he realized that, while the members were faithfully and conscientiously doing their best, a leader to assume the responsibility of selecting and directing the music was im-

perative. Although not himself a musician, Mr. Overton realized the value of music in Christian worship and after consulting with the Cabinet, he laid the matter before a young man—a member of the choir—and asked him to consider taking the leadership. To a young man of only slight musical training and no experience as a leader, this seemed a great deal to ask. But Duty from the lips of Mr. Overton was a mighty word, and how could one refuse its insistent call when he who voiced its call was so unquestioningly following whithersoever it led him? It was impossible to refuse. When, after a few days of consideration, the young man told Mr. Overton that he would undertake the work of choir leader, Mr. Overton showed much pleasure but little surprise. Turning to a member of his family he said, "I knew he would take the choir. I have been praying that he would every night since I asked him." Under the new leader and with the help of the Hour Club assignments, the regular choir soon numbered fifteen or more, and at the Christmas season some thirty singers gladly gave their time to the preparation and presentation of the Christmas music. Whatever the new choirmaster wished to do to

make the choir as orderly and efficient an organization as the other branches of the church work were becoming, met with sympathetic and cordial support from Mr. Overton. At the time of his death, the choir was asked to do what seemed at first an impossible thing—to sing at the funeral service of their dear young pastor. But the sense of Duty, so strong in him and so fearlessly obeyed by him, came to their aid, and so, bravely, through their tears they paid their tribute in a Christian hymn.

The organization which was probably dearest to Mr. Overton and knew best what was in his mind and heart to do for his people was his Cabinet. Early in his ministry he gathered about him five young men—members of the church—whom he organized into an advisory council, known as the “Pastor’s Cabinet.” To one member was entrusted supervision of the work of Church Extension; to another, the work of Organization; to another, Service; to another, Stewardship; to another, Missions. Pastor and cabinet held frequent meetings, at which various phases of the church work were discussed. Much, indeed, might be said of the results accomplished by this earnest group of young men; much, much

more of what they planned to do. One thing, however, is sufficient to show the deep and lasting nature of the work Mr. Overton began in them, and it is this—that in the face of the terrible and irreparable loss of their brave young leader, they highly resolved to keep on with the work he had begun, each in his own department as best he could. Lacking the stimulation and guidance of his companionship, this was for them a courageous thing to attempt.

As a pastor, Mr. Overton possessed the rare ability to be “all things to all men.” The loss of his dear parents and his own self-imposed study of human nature made him unusually responsive to the moods of his people. In trouble, his ready sympathy brought genuine comfort to the sad; in joy, his alert mind, keen humor and full enjoyment of life made him a congenial companion, — added zest to every pleasure. How fully he entered into the experiences of his people is shown by the fact that he spent an entire morning reading and studying a certain poem which he had been asked to read at the burial service of a dear friend in order to convey to the bereaved ones in that final reading all the comfort and cheer that he could express.

It must not be supposed that recreation occupied no place in Mr. Overton's life. No one loved good clean sport better than he. Tennis, baseball and various water sports he enjoyed keenly, but football, which demands quick thinking, pliant muscles, and great strength, was the sport he enjoyed best.

As Scout Master he became the idol of some twenty or more boys with whom he worked out the lore of Scout Manual and other branches of Scout practice. Last fall, he took his band of Scouts on a short camping expedition at the Sound. This will be remembered by many of them as a wonderful experience.

Mr. Overton was a member of the Mattituck Basketball Team and recognized as one of the best players Mattituck had. He entered into the game with the same whole-hearted spirit which characterized his work as our pastor. He loved a good swift game and, as a good sportsman, took his rebuffs with a smile.

As a preacher, Daniel Overton was a compelling personality. Every sermon, every lecture, even every "short talk" given at the frequent "musical services" which occurred during his pastorate, was prepared in the most careful and painstaking manner. His selection and arrangement of material, relentless logic,

and mastery of language held the attention of all, while his simple, straightforward, manly delivery added much to the impressiveness of his message. Mr. Overton did not preach anything merely to please his hearers but rather preached what he thought they ought to hear, regardless of the consequences. When, at times, his voice, always clear and ringing, held a note of admonition or warning, it seemed as if John the Baptist or one of the Old Testament prophets stood before us.

Mr. Overton possessed to an unusual degree those qualities which lead to universal popularity. Many, whose beliefs and practices differed from his admired the fearlessness and conscientiousness with which he expressed his own ideas. Above all, his rare smile and constant good nature endeared him to all. People who met him but casually found much in him to admire and imitate. To all who love "a sound mind in a sound body" he was the embodiment of that ideal. To those who worked with him and knew him best his death means an irreparable loss.

It may be truthfully said that Mr. Overton never lost sight of his high ideals and to them he devoted all his wonderful energy. With a fearlessness born of perfect faith in the ulti-

mate triumph of good over evil, he was to his flock—

“One who never turned his back but marched
breast forward.

Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed, though right were worsted,
wrong would triumph.

Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight
better. Sleep to wake.”

SOLIDARITY

Sermon delivered by Rev. Daniel H. Overton at the Mattituck Presbyterian Church:

Matt. : 23:37. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

In this text we have a statement of the purpose of Christ's ministry, and of the reason for its temporary failure. Jerusalem had great need of that unifying principle which Christ proposed. Her's was no "splendid isolation" of wastes of waters, behind which slack practices and disunion could safely bide unchallenged. For Israel, disunion meant subjugation, subjugation of a very bitter sort, under Roman slavers and tax extortioners. United, her case was by no means hopeless. The little republic of Switzerland defied the Hapsburg power, and has held her freedom in the very center of the milling wars of Europe's nations for centuries. Israel herself, united temporarily under the Maccabees, scored victories over the great Antiochus of Syria. But then came dissension, and defeat. . . .

When Jesus entered the field of Israel's affairs, he found "much cynicism and not a little despondency." He found dark hopelessness, lit through at irregular intervals with the lightnings of abortive revolutionary hopes. He found despair and voices crying, "Lo here," and "Lo, there!" He found runnings hither and yon, and desperate deeds in the darkness, and soldiers marching away with the precision of long training, and huddled bodies of the slain, in the gray dawning of a new day of toil and bitterness.

He found the people scattered over the mountains as sheep that have no shepherd; and he set himself to shepherd them, knowing full well with what enmity the wolves of Rome and that old fox, Herod would meet his efforts. Unity was the need of the people, a principle of unification that should be potent enough to override the petty hostilities and bickerings one with another that kept the people divided. A house that is divided against itself shall not stand. Hearken, oh Jerusalem!

But the factional spirit was too strong among the Jews. It won a temporary triumph over fellowship. Even in the face of Roman oppression, the Jews could not unite, could not forget their differences to make common

cause against the oppressor, the despoiler of their country and the enslaver of their youths and maidens. While Roman armies laid siege to Jerusalem, within the starving city, swept by pestilence, two Jewish factions fought against each other. One held the temple, the other the palace. A house divided against itself can not stand. No wonder Jerusalem fell, in the year of our Lord 70, and was utterly destroyed. Its obstinate separatism was incurable. No wonder, toward the close of his ministry, foreseeing the inevitable end, Jesus had wrung from his heart that passionate lament, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." From the earliest days until the end, the history of Israel is a story of "doubt and lame division, of discord and defeat." It is Judah against Israel, Jerusalem against Samaria, Pharisee and Sadducee, discord among brethren, back-stabbings in the dark, blood and tears. Not the many splendid attributes of the Jewish character, not the clear sight of the prophets, not the wisdom of Jesus himself, prevailed at the last against this incurable separatism, to save Jerusalem from utter destruction. "Rachel

weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Need we look far abroad to realize the similarity of our estate to-day. We have just come through a devastating war—a war made possible by our failure to recognize our common brotherhood. As long as any people look upon the men of another nation as fundamentally different, as having anything but the same essential passions and desires, we will have wars. Before a stable world peace can be consummated we must realize the oneness of the race. From the viewpoint of anthropological science, H. G. Wells has showed us the fallacy of attaching importance to the national divisions under which the world is at present organized. He demonstrates by carefully aligning his facts, that Europe itself is no less a melting-pot than America. He shows the successive waves of invasion raining down from the steppes of Asia on the Mediterranean civilizations. From his maps and tables there is but one conclusion possible. The races of Europe are only slightly varying mixtures of the same Nordic, Mediterranean, and Mongol stocks; and they are but one degree further

removed from the common ancestry of the whole world.

Thus does science come to the aid of Christianity in her propaganda for world brotherhood. But the faith in world brotherhood was never a baseless theory. Christ made that faith out of the raw material of his experience, out of personal contacts with men of many nations and persuasions, at the cross-roads of the world. And this faith is the center of Christian faith. Brotherhood is what gives color to the central teaching of the Kingdom. Brotherhood accepted and acted upon, is the condition of God's favor—and Christ's. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, MY BRETHREN. . . ."

Now, before you begin to say in your heart, "Oh yes, brotherhood," and to settle back with the comfortable heedlessness with which we always greet the familiar, let us take notice of what brotherhood means. It means that you shall count Germans your brothers, discounting the war hysteria. It means that Jews are your brothers, and negroes, and Chinamen, and Russian Bolsheviks. It means that there is no supportable evidence for the claim of those in privileged positions, that some are born to toil and want, and some to ease.

Brotherhood means that, when we seek to understand the reason for any human event, for Germany's madness, for Russia's revolution, for Irish combativeness, for what we in our damnable pride style the negro's "insolence," we will search our own hearts. For in the heart of each man are those same impulses, and, given the same conditions, they would bear the very same fruit. Not only are, as Kipling says, "the Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady sisters under their skins," but the church member in his comfortable pew, and the murderer spending an unpleasant minute in a great grim arm-chair, are brothers, and closer brothers than they can know.

What we most need in this day of wars that are world-wide, of unrest and industrial strife that threaten the structure of society, is a realization of this relationship, a grasp of the fact that we are sons of the one Father. Every other way lies ruin. Under the inventions of man, the earth shrinks. It becomes too small for hatred and contempt. It offers room only for fellowship, or death.

But, even as Jerusalem beseiged by Roman armies, we are stubbornly divisive. Our safety and our happiness depend on our achieving solidarity, and that right soon. Yet there is

in our hearts the same obstinate separatism. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing, and ye would not!"

And ye would not! We have in our tradition the memory of a great war-cry, "United we stand; divided we fall." There is a truth with an ever-widening horizon. Not only the colonies in their revolution, but the world in its need, must learn that lesson. But we have not learned it. The extent of our rebellion of the wisdom of our fathers we do not yet realize. We are becoming like Israel, hopelessly, obstinately separatist. We are refusing Christ's call to solidarity.

Here is a day when upon the tongue of every thinker is one great truth, that the most important thing about any man is his relation to others. Whatever value is in the mystic experiences of his inner life, is subordinate, and indeed is to be measured by its outworking in his relation to society. We have, in theory got rid of statics. Everything is relationship. Every value is ultimately a social value. To accomplish this has taken nineteen centuries of Christ.

Yet at the end of these nineteen centuries,

when the social emphasis is established — when the social gospel is being recognized as the true orthodoxy — when social service is an avowed end of the Church; it remains anathema to make an ism of that service. To avow social purposes, and make the very name socialism anathema— is that not conclusive proof that our fine words of brotherhood are words only, that we will not tolerate the practicing of what we preach?

Let it not be supposed for an instant that I think all Christians must of necessity be Socialists, in the sense in which that term is used as the designation of a political party. But understand clearly, every true Christian must be a socialist in the sense in which that term is used as the opposite of individualist, as basically opposed to separatism and division. As regards the party of that name—well, that is a distinct question, pertinent indeed to our subject, but too lengthy to be discussed here. We may, however, touch upon it as far as it serves to illustrate our stubborn resistance to Christ, our Jerusalemite refusal to be gathered together in a solidaristic fellowship under Him. For here is a party that avows a universal brotherhood, as opposed to the divisive hatreds and brawling of nationalist states, that aims

at the breaking of barriers, the elimination of conditions which makes for unchristian distinction between man and man. Now that is a Christian purpose. The purposes of other parties are avowedly nationalistic. In respect to internal affairs, they are avowedly separatist, seeking to perpetuate class distinctions.

I am not debating methods. For the present, I have not the slightest concern over the relative administrative merits of the parties under consideration. Considerations of ability, of wisdom as to ways and means, of sincerity, may justify your vote. But none of these can possibly justify abusive hostility to the only organized party that has so much as avowed a Christian purpose, so much as envisioned a universal human brotherhood. The foundation may be false. The superstructure may be false. That I am not debating. But the purpose is Christian, and as such, demands a more Christian considerateness than most Christians give it.

What is the explanation of our intolerance? Is it not that we, being cynical and obstinately separatist, are reasonably bitter toward those whose idealism has more vitality than ours? For the separatism of our day has worked its way into the Church, in the Church of Christ.

Whose heart could not endure the discord of His day. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! Separatism has come into the Church, not only to divide the Church against itself, but to make it forget its world brotherhood. Only the other day I heard a preacher say regarding brotherhood, that it was conditioned on acceptance of God's Fatherhood, so that brotherhood in fact, did not exist and could not be practiced with those outside the Church. That is an error peculiarly easy to our divisive instincts, an error all too prevalent in Churches of all ages. The brotherhood of man does not depend upon the acceptance of God's Fatherhood. It depends upon the FACT of God's Fatherhood. It does not depend on the acceptance of anything at all. It is here. It is a sober fact. We are of one ancestry—and of one destiny.

Black or white, Jew or Gentile, farmer, laborer, artisan, or owner—One is our Father, and all we are brethren. We are of one nature, of one blood. We have all sinned. Together we must address ourselves to one salvation. Let us not fall into the easy error of ascribing all unrighteousness to one man, whether he be Kaiser or President, whether he be labor leader or capitalist. Common impulses run through all our veins—passions, greeds, un-

holy ambitions and desires, and if the truth be known, common yearnings for a saner living, for a kindlier and more successful day. "I saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter: and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter." Let us not be harsh in our judgment upon any class of men in this bitter struggle that is the only life we know. The judgments of God's inexorable laws are harsh enough upon them. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith Jehovah." But let us make up our minds that we are brothers, and being bound together in the one destiny, let us determine that that destiny shall be for good. This we may do, if we will but realize that our interests are one, and turn our best abilities from strife to service. Let us desire the Kingdom above our chief joy. O my people, give not our Master occasion for such lament; "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!"

In Christ "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all."

A PRAYER

Eternal Father, unseen yet manifest, we believe in Thee. Help Thou our unbelief. In matters both small and great, remove our doubts, quiet our fears, and make us feel safe in the security of Thy presence. We wish to believe; and yet we are beset by all manner of doubts.

We wish to serve Thee faithfully; and yet our heart oftentimes fails us. As Thy Son gave unquestionable assurance to doubting Thomas, so do we pray Thee to make us firm in the great questions of Thy being. Give us confidence that Thou art, and Thou art a rewarder of those that diligently see Thee, and serve Thee. Yet there are many things which Thou did not ordain that man should know, and many the time of whose revealing is not come. For these give us patience, that we may learn to bear without resentment Thy divine reserve. Give us a simple faith in Thee, and a confidence in the coming of Thy kingdom upon earth; that we may not be borne down by the burden of this unintelligible world, nor by the mystery of the hiding of Thy countenance from mortal eye. For now in the half-blindness

of our selfish interests, we see Thee but as through a glass darkly; yet when we have learned to live for others, then we shall see Thee face to face in Thy kingdom of heaven on earth. In the name of Him who lighted the way unto this kingdom. Amen.

DANIEL H. OVERTON.

DEATH AND FUNERAL

(By Rev. Chas. E. Craven, D. D.)

On Monday morning, February 28, 1921, the Rev. Daniel H. Overton, finished his earthly course at the Eastern Long Island Hospital in Greenport, a young man not yet twenty-five years of age, who had been but a few short days before the very embodiment of health and vigor.

The previous Wednesday evening he conducted the mid-week service, apparently in his usual good health. It is altogether probable that he was suffering then but with characteristic fortitude gave no sign of it. Before morning it became necessary for him to summon medical aid. An obscure abdominal trouble developed and on Saturday he was removed to the hospital, where an operation was performed upon him Sunday morning, but without avail to the saving of his precious life.

The news of his death came as a stunning blow to his family and the community. It seemed unbelievable. Gradual realization of the sad truth brought profound sorrow to every heart and home in Mattituck, and un-

utterable sympathy for Mrs. Overton. From near and far, from innumerable friends came messages of grief and sympathy.

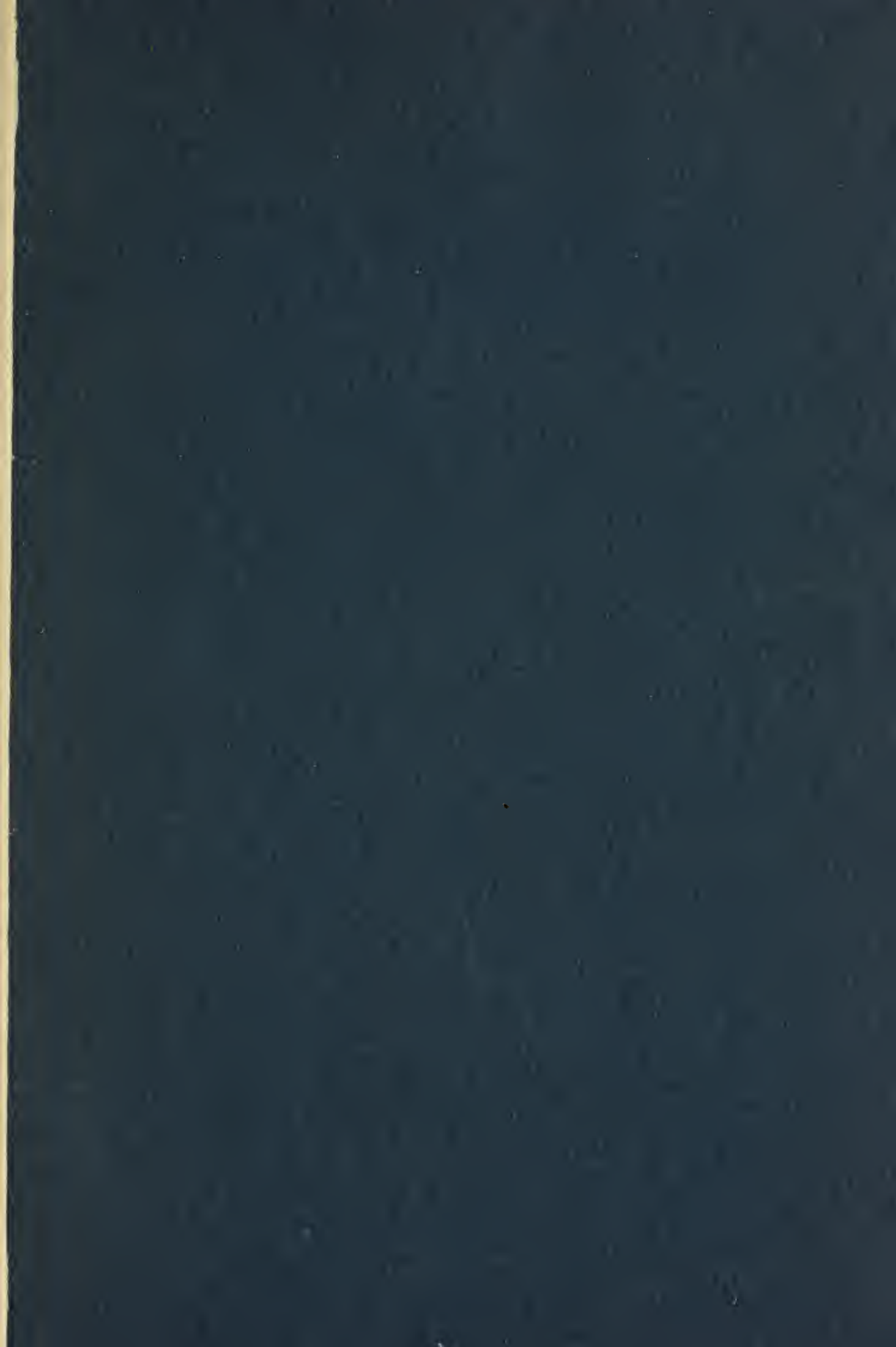
The funeral services were held Thursday afternoon, March 3d, in the Mattituck Presbyterian Church, where he had ministered not yet a full year in this, his first pastoral charge. Many ministers of the Presbytery of Long Island were present and pastors from neighboring villages of all denominations. Luncheon was served at the parsonage for these visiting ministers by the kind ladies of the church.

After prayer at the parsonage and procession to the crowded church simple and tender services were conducted by the Rev. Dr. Charles E. Craven, assisted by the Rev. William H. Lloyd of the Southold Presbyterian Church, the Rev. John G. Hehr of the Presbytery of Brooklyn-Nassau, the Rev. C. C. Cornwell of the Riverhead Congregational Church, and the Rev. Abram Conklin of the Southold Universalist Church. The choir sang the hymn, "For All Thy Saints Who from Their Labors Rest." Dr. Craven and Mr. Lloyd represented the Presbytery of Long Island, Mr. Hehr spoke for the Presbytery of Brooklyn-Nassau, which ordained Mr. Overton, and Mr. Cornwell for the Ministerial Association

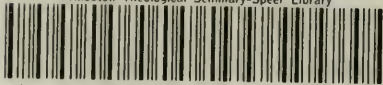
of which Mr. Overton was a beloved member. Mr. Conklin offered a prayer that led every heart to the throne of grace to find grace to help in time of need.

The burial was in the Southold Cemetery, beside his father and mother. The Rev. Abram Conklin spoke the words of committal and Dr. Craven offered prayer. The clouds of a dark day opened for a little and the sunlight broke upon the mourners gathered at the grave.

The bearers were Ellis G. Reeve, Malcolm M. Reeve, Harry I. Aldrich, J. Trowbridge Kirkup, Elwood S. Reeve and Terry W. Tuthill, the first five of whom were the members of the Pastor's Cabinet. May grace and strength be given these young men who bore the body of their brave young leader to the grave, to bear, so far as they can, the burden that he laid down at the Master's call.



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